

The Compassionate Friends



Boca Raton Chapter, February 2009 561-368-0324

The Compassionate Friends, Inc., is a self-help organization offering friendship and understanding to all bereaved parents. TCF is non-denominational and all bereaved parents are welcome. TCF National headquarters is P.O. Box 3686, Oak Brook, Illinois 60522. Telephone 630-990-0010, toll free 877-969-0010, Fax 877-969-0010.

<p>Schedule of Meetings: Held at St. Paul's Church 701 W. Palmetto Park Rd., Boca Raton All meetings begin at 7:30 p.m.</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>February 2</td> <td>February 16</td> </tr> <tr> <td>March 2</td> <td>March 16</td> </tr> <tr> <td>April 6</td> <td>April 20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>May 4</td> <td>May 18</td> </tr> <tr> <td>June 1</td> <td>June 15</td> </tr> </table>	February 2	February 16	March 2	March 16	April 6	April 20	May 4	May 18	June 1	June 15	<table border="0"> <tr> <td><i>Chapter Leader</i></td> <td><i>Gail Schroeder (Engel's Mom)</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Newsletter Editor</i></td> <td><i>Gail Schroeder (Engel's Mom)</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Refreshments</i></td> <td><i>Ina & Cary Winters (Randi's Mom & Dad)</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Librarian</i></td> <td><i>Jerry Flax (Brett's Dad)</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>New Members</i></td> <td><i>Nate Kimbleton (Robin & Melinda's Dad)</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Greeter</i></td> <td><i>Eileen Kesnig (Eric's Mom)</i></td> </tr> </table>	<i>Chapter Leader</i>	<i>Gail Schroeder (Engel's Mom)</i>	<i>Newsletter Editor</i>	<i>Gail Schroeder (Engel's Mom)</i>	<i>Refreshments</i>	<i>Ina & Cary Winters (Randi's Mom & Dad)</i>	<i>Librarian</i>	<i>Jerry Flax (Brett's Dad)</i>	<i>New Members</i>	<i>Nate Kimbleton (Robin & Melinda's Dad)</i>	<i>Greeter</i>	<i>Eileen Kesnig (Eric's Mom)</i>
February 2	February 16																						
March 2	March 16																						
April 6	April 20																						
May 4	May 18																						
June 1	June 15																						
<i>Chapter Leader</i>	<i>Gail Schroeder (Engel's Mom)</i>																						
<i>Newsletter Editor</i>	<i>Gail Schroeder (Engel's Mom)</i>																						
<i>Refreshments</i>	<i>Ina & Cary Winters (Randi's Mom & Dad)</i>																						
<i>Librarian</i>	<i>Jerry Flax (Brett's Dad)</i>																						
<i>New Members</i>	<i>Nate Kimbleton (Robin & Melinda's Dad)</i>																						
<i>Greeter</i>	<i>Eileen Kesnig (Eric's Mom)</i>																						

The February Newsletter is dedicated to
 Clayton Dean Anderson in loving memory from his family

Special Days

We call them "Special Days" and there is really nothing special at all about a child dying. The important thing is that we never forget them and by listing their birthday and the anniversary of their death, we always acknowledge their existence...that they were HERE, that their lives had MEANING, and they were LOVED, and that they are MISSED.

Kelly, daughter of Bonnie & Don Parrish, birthday 2-2-62
Samantha, daughter of Scott & Marissa Wynkoop, birthday 2-2-96
Linda, daughter of Elaine Weinstein, date of passing 2-2-05
Amie, daughter of Phyllis Ashby, birthday 2-3-88
Jordan, son of Janet Vogel, date of passing 2-4-01
Serena, daughter of Debra James, date of passing 2-5-06
Adrianna, daughter of Peter & Patricia Aurigemma, birthday 2-6-89
Tim, son of Dottie Kidd, birthday 2-6-76
Lynne, daughter of Bebe Hyman, date of passing 2-7-08
Thomas, son of Connie & Jack Aiello, date of passing 2-8-01
Ivan, son of Monica Herlihy, birthday 2-10-72
Dacia, daughter of Laurie Pasarell, date of passing 2-10-07
Antonio, son of Evangelina Magdaleno, birthday 2-12-85
Eric, son of Shelley & Jay Faust, date of passing 2-13-06
Steven, son of Norman Couf, date of passing 2-13-97
Rusty, son of Pat Compton Percy, birthday 2-13-61
Bret, son of Barbara & Charlie Britton, date of passing 2-15-06
Kathy, daughter of Harriet & Bernie Molinski, birthday 2-15-53
Eileen, daughter of Rodney & Lucille Radbill, birthday 2-17-46
Allan, son of Charlotte & Henry Weintraub, date of passing 2-17-06
Michael, son of Catherine Riesgo, birthday 2-18-86
Ryan, son of Barry Gabriel, date of passing 2-18-01
Engel, daughter of Gail & Walt Schroeder, birthday 2-19-91
Morgan, son of Renae VanWagner, birthday 2-19-83
Ed, son of Claire & Jack Shames, birthday 2-20-59
Chet, son of Rhoda Halperin, date of passing 2-20-07
Craig, son of Sandy Hankin, birthday 2-22-70
Ed, son of Claire & Jack Shames, date of passing 2-24-07
Autumn, daughter of Scott & MaryAnn Streader, birthday 2-22-82
Clay, son of Amale & Roger Anderson, birthday 2-23-83
Brett, son of Laura & Walter Hochhauser, birthday 2-23-78
Chad, son of Josie Duras, birthday 2-24-78
Luciano, son of Silvia & Eduardo Ranallo, date of passing 2-24-08
Mitchell, grandson of Helene Aronowitz, birthday 2-27-83
Earl, son of Bill Rickards, date of passing 2-28-04

New Members:

Mary McCracken, son Leo 12-13-74 10-16-08
Nina & Alan Maslin, son Dorit 8-4-70 10-12-08
Eric & Audrey Schmelede, son Rocky 11-8-07,
daughter, Olivia 10-21-08 11-8-08
Peter & Patricia Aurigemma, daughter Adrianna 2-6-89 12-17-08
Heidi Bjorklund, son Tanner 10-25-08 10-25-08
Nancy & Mickey Drachler, son David 10-24-77 1-26-08
Irena Gegelsky, son Gene 12-4-88 12-13-08
Anita & Herb Beckerman, son Lawrence 7-26-59 9-12-06
Dorothy Duel, son Brian 7-18, 12-12

To Our New Members

Coming to your first meeting is the hardest thing to do. But you have nothing to lose and everything to gain. Try not to judge your first meeting as to whether or not TCF will work for you. The second, third, or fourth meeting might be the time you will find the right person – or just the right words said that will help you in your grief work.

To Our Old Members

We need your encouragement and support. You are the string that ties our group together and the glue that makes it stick. Each meeting, we have new parents. THINK BACK...what would it have been like for you if there had not been any “oldie” to welcome you, share your grief, and encourage you? It was from them you heard, “your pain will not always be this bad; it does get softer.”

Telephone Friends...if you need to talk

Gail Schroeder	561-368-6916
Jerry Flax	954-341-8657
Ronda Fryburg	954-753-0493
Nate Kimbleton	561-414-0811

If you would like the entire current month newsletter dedicated to your child, please call the chapter line of 561-368-0324. A donation of \$100 is requested.



A love gift is in honor of a child who has died. All gifts are of no charge to our members and you may either submit one by calling the chapter phone number or by leaving one at any meeting. Remember you may use this tool in our newsletter for your child or in memory of other's children. This is a wonderful way for others to say, "I am remembering your child."

My Sweetheart Ivan: You are with me every day, so close in my heart and soul but I miss you and your calls, our laughing, and your teasing me.

No one made me laugh like you. I will love you forever and you will be with me forever.

Happy 37th baby. The balloons are coming your way on February 10. Look for them

Always, your loving Mom

Dear Timmy: February 6th is your birthday and again we will miss celebrating with you. You always enjoyed parties so much with your friends and family.

**Happy Birthday
Love Mom & Cindy**

Eric: Another year has passed. We all miss your beautiful smile and hugs.
Thinking of you always!!

**Love xxooxx
Mom**

**Scott: Happy Birthday (Belated) Love You,
Mamma**

Dearest Engel: You turn 18 years old on February 19th. Nine years with us and nine years of birthdays without you. How can that be? I know you would have grown into a beautiful young woman with a heart as beautiful. Even though your birthdays in Heaven must be so amazing, we miss celebrating with you instead of decorating the cemetery in memory.
Happy,Happy Birthday sweetie.

Love Mommy and Daddy

**Eric: Happy Valentine's Day Baby! Can you believe Keith will be 26! Where has all the time gone?
Miss you everyday
xxooxxoo Love Mom**

Scott: I love you. I miss you more everyday. Mamma

A Message From The Chapter

“How many children do you have?” This seems like such a simple question. It is not a complicated religious or political question and the answer should be easy. However, for a bereaved parent, this question can cause stuttering, cascading tears, stumbling, or an uneasy silence once it is been asked. When a child dies, this question is the one that many bereaved parents struggle with. When we have surviving children and a deceased child, we include all our children. Some answer, “three children, two here and one in heaven.” Or “a son in Virginia and a daughter in heaven”, or for those who have lost their only child, “one....in heaven” or “a son who is no longer with us.”

Should a bereaved parent always include all their children when asked this question? Is leaving the deceased child out denying their existence or is it just too unacceptable to speak to some people about?

This is only one of a multitude of questions that bereaved parents face after the death of a child, questions by family, friends and strangers. Questions such as “aren’t you over that yet?”, “isn’t it time to move on?”, “when will you be back to normal?”, “are you still talking about her/him?”, and comments such as “I know how you feel – my dog died last year”, “well, you are still young, you can have more children”, “at least you have your other children”, “they are in a better place” or “God needed another flower in His garden” plaque a bereaved parent and the effort to cope becomes greater and more overwhelming. Well meaning friends and relatives often can not provide the level of understanding needed in order to ease the worries, guilt, sadness, and hopelessness of a bereaved parent.

Where can a bereaved parent turn for understanding and hope? There are few people in a bereaved parent’s circle that actually understand totally. Everyone at Compassionate Friends “gets it”. We have all been there, we are all going through the same pain and overwhelming grief. We all have questions, doubts, guilts, sadness and we can all share with each other whatever we are feeling. Each parent can truly relate as we listen, talk and share.

It is all the “worst”. We are living a life that has been turned inside out and upside down. We are surviving and trying to piece a life back together without our child. We are struggling to even find the desire to want to live our life again and put those pieces back together. Yet we realize that there is always a piece missing.

A bereaved parent never “gets over” losing a child. We learn to cope, to come up with survival techniques and to rediscover contentment in our lives, but it can be a very long and lonely road without someone to walk besides us; to hold our hand; give lots of hugs and hope and understanding.

Every month we come together to honor our child’s life, share memories, thoughts and feelings, vent our frustrations and sometimes lovingly tell a favorite memory. But we deal with the pain and tragedy of our child’s death every day in some way. It may be a song on the radio, the sight of a mother and child shopping; attending someone else’s wedding, hearing the news of a friend’s grandchild. We are then reminded that all the future dreams we and our child had will never come to be. There are so many issues that bereaved parents deal with on a daily basis.

People need to understand it doesn’t hurt for us to remember and talk about our child. It doesn’t hurt for us to tell our stories and have connections with our child. What hurts the most is other people forgetting that our child lived, *because the days they lived*; the times we were blessed with their lives, is so much more important than the *one day that they died*.

We need to choose to live on, to reinvest our lives for ourselves, to make a difference in memory of our child and to live a life as best as possible with what and whom we have in our lives each and every day. We have learned more than most people, what a precious gift life is and how important it is to tell people we love them.

Our children taught us *priceless lessons* through both their life and their death and those are lessons that are unforgettable and undeniable and to forsake our precious children, their memories, their lives, is impossible.

We love our children, we always will and they are forever loved, forever missed and forever remembered.

Gail



Clayton Dean Anderson

February 23, 1983 - June 5th, 2004

And God Said...

I said, "God, I hurt."

And God said, "I know".

I said, "God, I cry a lot."

And God said, "That is why I gave you tears."

I said, "God, I am so depressed."

And God said, "That is why I gave you Sunshine."

I said, "God, life is so hard."

And God said, "That is why I gave you loved ones."

I said, "God, my loved one died."

And God said, "So did mine."

I said, "God, it is such a loss."

And God said, "I saw mine nailed to a cross."

I said, "God, but your loved one lives."

And God said, "So does yours."

I said, "God, where are they now?"

*And God said, "Mine is on My right
and yours is in the Light."*

I said, "God, it hurts."

And God said, "I know...;

*But I am always with you, even unto the end of the age
and your child is here with Me in My kingdom...*

Rejoice!"



*Dad, Mom, Amale, Crystal, Baden, Nana, Papa Dick, Aunt Teresa,
Uncle Roger, Aunt KK, Uncle T.G, Uncle Craig, Rosanna
and cousins, Brandon, Kevin, Derek, Sean, Thomas, Mathew and Mitchell*



***Happy Birthday Engel. Today you will turn eighteen.
Oh how much we would like to have shared all the years
you would have had in your teens.
When we think of your beautiful face it all seems so wrong
Tears have been falling now for so long.
You had so much to look forward to and so much left to do
But God needed somebody in heaven who is as special as you.
Nothing is the same now and we doubt it ever will be
But your death and story has allowed us to help people, as you see.
We miss your voice, your hugs and hearing you sing.
Dressing up you loved, and now you have a new accessory;
A pair of Angel's wings.
Engel, you are always around us, engulfing us with your love
Giving us strength, keeping us close and watching over us from above.
Happy Birthday, Engel. Today you will turn eighteen.
Oh how much we would like to have shared all the years
you would have had in your teens.***



In Loving Memory of Earl Rickards

October 10, 1961

February 28, 2004

**Hello to my wonderful son, husband, father and brother. Earl, it is unbelievable that
On February 28th, you will be gone from us physically but here with us in our hearts and minds, as you
will be forever with us. Earl, I just want to share with you a beautiful picture of you, Billy and Brendon on
our last cruise together to the Bahamas during the summer of 2003. Billy and Brendon will always
remember that vacation with their Dad and my loving son.**

Loving you always,

Billy, Brendon, Nora, Mom, Bruce, Dad and Barbara and family and friends

I Do Believe

**There is nothing I can do,
to make your child come back
There are no words I can say,
that can replace the words you long to hear**

**There are no answer's I can give,
that will satisfy your questions
There is not another soul I can introduce you to that will ever replace theirs
And, there is no love I can offer that will ever replace the love you shared**

**I can not promise your broken heart will ever be complete
I will not say it could have been worse
I will not deny it was a tragedy
I will not lie and tell you they will come back**

**They never really left
I do promise they hear you when you speak
I will say they love you no matter the distance
I will not say that they are in a better place
But, I will not lie; they are waiting to greet you someday**

**Your child is every you step you take
Your child is in everything you do
Your child is the air you breathe
Your child is every beat of your heart**

“They are like the wind. You can not see them...but you will always feel them”

Why Do You Need The Compassionate Friends?

Where can a bereaved parent turn to for understanding and hope? The Boca Raton Chapter of The Compassionate Friends is a support group for parents to provide friendship, understanding and hope for all parents who have lost a child, no matter what age or circumstances. Here is a place where parents meet other parents who truly know the grief journey. A place where it is okay to talk about your child who has died. A place where other parents understand the need to tell your story of what happened and it is okay to cry and to laugh. Everyone at The Compassionate Friends “gets it.” We have all been there. We are all going through the same pain and overwhelming grief. We all have questions, doubts, guilts, sadness and we all share with each other whatever we are feeling. Each parent can truly relate as we listen, talk and share. It is all “the worst” – we are living a life that has been turned inside out and upside down. We are struggling and trying to piece a life back together without our child. We are struggling to even find the desire to want to live our life again spiritually and in memory, not physically, not the way he or she is supposed to be. It is just not natural for a parent to outlive their child and when this happens and our world is not normal, the questions, tears and aching for our child just doesn’t go away magically one day. A bereaved parent will never “get over” losing a child. We learn to cope, to come up with survival techniques, to rediscover contentment in our lives, but it can be a very long and lonely road without someone to walk beside us, to hold our hand, give lots of hugs and hope and understanding. The Compassionate Friends support group provides a warm, comforting place where bereaved parents can bridge the gap between their emotional world and their real, working world. None of us are professionals. We are just bereaved parents with experience. The Compassionate Friends does not have all the answers to the multitude of questions that bereaved parents daily struggle with, but we believe that through our sharing, by telling each other how we cope and how we manage to find the strength and energy to survive another day, another month, another year and how we reinvested our lives for ourselves and our child helps each other to find some semblance of answers to pick up the pieces and put our lives somewhat back together again.

Meeting Schedule and Topics

January 5

Coping-Moping-Hoping (post holiday meeting)

Presented by Gail Schroeder

January 19

Men on one Side, Women on the Other

Presented by Jerry Flax

February 2

Religion and Spirituality

Presented by Walt Schroeder

February 16

“Am I Making Progress”

Presented by Nate Kimbleton

March 2

Coping With Grief

Guest Speaker Abby Mosher

March 16

Death by Illness versus Sudden Death

Presented by Gail Schroeder

April 6

Surviving Passover and Easter

Presented by Nate Kimbleton

April 20

Marriage Survival after the lost of a child

Presented by Ronda Fryburg

May 4

Grief of Mothers and Grief of Fathers

Presented by Gail Schroeder

May 18

Myths about Grief

Presented by Gail Schroeder

June 1

Share a Story about your Child

Presented by Gail Schroeder

June 15

What’s Bothering Me?

Presented by Jerry Flax

The Compassionate Friends 2009 Fund Raiser

**The chapter will be holding our fund raiser event on Friday night,
April 17, 2009 at St. Paul Church**

**In order to continue to offer the events and features our chapter has, we are in need to
raise additional funds.**

**I am hoping that everyone will take an interest in supporting their chapter by making
this once a year fund raiser a success for us to operate another year.**

**Pre raffle sales will start mid February and I will be asking each member to make an
effort to sell at least 2 books. In addition, a donated basket for the silent auction has been
asked of the members to be able to still have this as part of the event. This basket can be
items that have been solicited by local business establishments or family and friends. A
plaque designating this was presented in memory of your child will be displayed on the
table. There are materials available for you to have in order to seek out donated gifts. I
have designed a brochure telling who we are and how important this fund raiser is to the
bereavement community, as well as stating we are a non profit 501c3 group. If you need
these brochures or the flyer for the event, please contact me and I will send them to you.**

**These materials will be available at all the meetings starting February 2nd, as well.
I will continue to do as much as I can to coordinate and assemble all aspects of the fund
raiser but without the assistance of the members, the fund raiser will not raise the monies
we need in order to continue to offer the telephone line, holiday dinners, the Candle
Lighting Ceremony, etc.**

**Please consider what the chapter has allowed you to receive from it and give back some of
your time and effort. This is asked of you only once a year.**

Thank you

Gail

The Compassionate Friends Credo

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends. We reach out to each other with understanding and with hope. Our children have died at all ages and from many different causes but our love for our children unites us. Your pain becomes my pain, just as your hope becomes my hope. We come together from all walks of life and many different circumstances. We are a unique family because we represent many races and creeds. We are young and we are old. Some of us are far along in our grief but others still feel a grief so fresh and so intensely painful, that we feel hopeless and see no hope. Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength; some of us are struggling to find answers. Some of us are angry, filled with guilt, or in deep depression; others radiate an inner peace. But whatever the pain we bring to this gathering of The Compassionate Friends, it is a pain we will share just as we share with each other our love for our children. We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves, but we are committed to building that future together as we reach out to each other in love and share the anger as well as the peace; share the faith as well as the doubts and help each other to grieve as well as to grow.